

April 4, 2002

Dear Mr. President:

As a civilian physician in Houston, I have just returned from an awesome, six day course presented by the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Chemical Defense at Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD and the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases at Fort Detrick in Frederick, MD.

The course titled "Medical Management of Chemical and Biological Casualties" was truly one of the finest continuing medical education courses in my thirty years of medical practice. With the world events over the past twelve or so years and a life long interest in emergency health care, I felt totally unprepared should our 'homeland' suffer a chemical or biological terrorist incident. Because of the Army's course I now feel more confident and much better prepared to assist in the care for those casualties should they occur.

The staff that taught the course from both facilities deserve our country's highest praise and gratitude. These men and women are well educated and totally involved in their area of expertise. Our Armed Services and Our Country are certainly in the best of hands. That a few civilian medical providers were invited to participate in this enlightening experience along with 'medical folk' from all of the military and Coast Guard services is an absolute credit to the U.S. Army, The Department of Defense and to the Presidency. Please extend my gratitude to COL James A. Romano, Jr., MS, Commander of USAMRICD and his great staff of instructors. Also a BIG "Huuu Raaa" to COL Edward M. Eitzen, Jr., MC, Commander of USAMRIID and his outstanding staff.

Yours Truly,

R. Craig Bales, M.D.

RCB:mj

cc: Hon. Tom Ridge, Assistant to the President for Homeland Security  
Hon. Donald H. Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense  
Hon. Thomas E. White, Secretary of the Army  
COL James A. Romano, Jr., MS, USA, Commander of USAMRICD  
COL Edward M. Eitzen, Jr., MC, USA, Commander of USAMRIID  
Hon. David Dewhurst, Chairman of the Texas Governor's Task Force on Homeland Security